



Arizona Department of Agriculture

1688 W. Adams Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-4373 FAX (602) 542-5420

PRESS RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Ed Hermes, 602-542-0958

ADA Supports Texas Decision to Stop Canadian Cattle Exports to Mexico

Joins Texas, New Mexico in asking private facilities to follow suit

(Phoenix, AZ) –Don Butler, Director of the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA), announced today his support of a Texas plan that prohibits Canadian breeding Cattle from being exported through Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) ports into Mexico until Mexico accepts U.S. breeding cattle. Director Butler went further to call on Arizona livestock export facilities to also stop Canadian cattle exports into Mexico until Mexico accepts U.S. breeding cattle.

"Mexico must recognize international standards and allow the importation of U.S. breeding stock" said Butler. "It is unreasonable that Mexico open their borders to Canadian breeding cattle, but maintain their embargo on U.S. breeding cattle, which have had a much smaller risk of disease."

In December 2003, a single Canadian-born cow in the state of Washington was confirmed to have Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). Since then, the U.S. has worked to reestablish beef and live cattle trade consistent with international standards. Several countries have recognized those standards and are accepting U.S. live cattle. Recently, the U.S. has agreed to once again accept Canadian cattle for the first time since BSE was discovered in Canada. Mexico also struck a deal recently to accept Canadian cattle, but unfortunately continues to reject imports of U.S. breeding cattle.

"These negotiations should have been trilateral between all North American countries, rather than a patch work of bilateral agreements that leaves our U.S. cattle producers at a disadvantage for no reason," said Director Butler.

Unlike the TDA which operates five livestock export facilities along the Texas-Mexico border, Arizona's two export facilities located in Nogales and Douglas are privately owned and operated. Although the state has no jurisdiction over either export facility, the ADA joins with the Texas and New Mexico Departments of Agriculture in asking all private export facilities to stop Canadian cattle going into Mexico until Mexico accepts U.S. cattle.